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The
Path o' Dreams

T. S. Jones, Jr.

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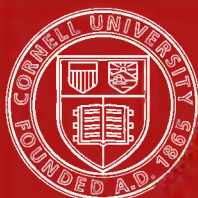
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The Path o' Dreams

The Path o' Dreams

Thomas S. Jones, Jr.



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TO
ROBERT TANSEY LAUGHLIN

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THE PATH o' DREAMS

The Piper

We danced and sang through the sylvan glade
As the piper played, as the piper played
With never a thought of the joy he made;
For his squeaking pipe was quaintly small
And the rasping notes would break and fall.
We thought it quite poor if we thought at all
As the piper played.

The shadows were long in the sylvan glade
As the price we paid, as the price we paid.
We had little to give, else he might have
stayed;
But others must dance while he must play.
Yet it seemed so strange he went away,
For we didn't then know we had lived our day
And the price was paid.

Echo

And Spring withal is just across the way, —
Though harsh and shrill the shifts of March
 come blowing,
The softened pipes of dreamy-sodden May
Sound once again like forest streams a-flow-
 ing.

O Songs of Yester-Spring that are no more,
O Hours of Buried Youth, so sweet of yore,
Down 'neath your grassy graves in endless
 sleep
I wonder if you wake, and hear, — and weep.

At Dusk

A line of gold, a shade of withered rose
Amid the gray, — oh, just a little while
Before the night; as though day could not
close
Its eyes in sleep without one last sweet smile.

To

Closed in a Vase of Gold, there lie
Flowers of Lavender; dead and cold
And void of life as are the walls that hold
Their dust. Yet in a silent mystery
They breathe a perfume throughout all
 eternity,
And ever in a haunting fragrance bless
A lonely heart with tenderness.

Ashes of Lavender! And a breath
Can hold forever sweet a Vase of Life,
And smother even Death in Love-in-Death.

Tears

So long ago it was, so long ago, —
And I forgot 'twas but a charge, for, oh!
It was so sweet to keep, to know.

Only forgive — you see love needs must grow
When heav'n is near each hour — and it is so,
So hard just then to let it go.

Reverie

The night has lost her gage within the pool
 And wide-eyed she,
As pass the hours beside the waters cool,
 Stalks wistfully.

Blue shadows of gray trees mid golden mist,
 Tower after tower,
Are caught the while in liquid amethyst
 With one moon flower.

But she wots not the shadow trees afloat
 Gray gold between,
Only she notes her flower — a little boat
 Upon the sheen.

And when the yellow moon grown pale with
 age
 Sinks in the gray,
She sees — oh, strange! — deep in the pool
 her gage
 Drownèd for aye.

The Gloaming Hour

Alone — a wanderer throughout the streets
 of day,
One who but wished to roam
Not knowing then; ah, now, only to ask, to
 pray
For you to take me home.

Soul-Slumber

Where there is the red of roses,
Where the heather blowing sighs,
She in lonely sleep reposes
With the mould-dust in her eyes:
And she never knows the flowers
Bloom above her in their bowers,
And she never knows the hours
Drag so slowly where she lies.

Oh, I would that I were lying
Where the wild June-rose hedge blows,
Fading as the sun is dying,
As the day draws to its close;
For my soul is gone forever,
Dead with her to answer never,
And when soul and body sever
There is death in life, God knows.

Harvest

Yellow leaves and autumn wind,
For summer days have flown,
And now there is a harvesting
Of that which once was sown.
Here men together reap their grain,
Here men reap theirs alone;
And many there are who reap the grain
And bind the golden sheaves,
And many there are whose arms are full
Of dead and yellow leaves.

Constancy

Still deep in the lane do the red roses blow
 And cover quite tenderly
Their names that were graven long ages ago
 On the old, old trysting tree.

And though they are dead with their vows all
 undone,
 False to troth and fealty,
And though each frail heart 'neath the far
 colder stone
 Now crumbled to dust may be ;

Still deep in the lane do the red roses blow
 And cover quite tenderly
Their names that were graven long ages ago
 On the old, old trysting tree.

My Silent Years

Like souls they softly slip away;
 The wistful twilight wind
Is not less still nor sad than they
 That leave but me behind, —
For all they take and I who stay
 Again may never find.

Good-bye, good-bye, my silent years;
 Some day when I am dead.
Though now I stand so mute with tears,
 Some day I trust instead
To find that bourne where reappears
 Each hour rememberèd, —
To find again my silent years
 Some day when I am dead.

Träumerei

There is a place of dreams, Dear, a place of
dreams

Where you and I, my head upon your breast,
Ride toward the South. Far in the yellow
West

There is a fading light, while o'er the moonlit
sky

The clouds fly from the wind; and you and I
Just dream together, dreaming thus to rest
Forever and a day in that far place of dreams.

Indian Summer

Soft through the purple of the western hills,
Through veils of haze,
Wherefrom this peace,— this rest which in
me thrills, —
Spirit of Autumn Days?

Where are the questionings of summer
spent, —
Or are they with my years, lost memories,
Spirit of Sweet Content?

Enough to lie and listen as the day grows old
To melodies
From that near choir of voices manifold, —
Spirits of Gathered Leaves.

Once

Ah, who could know
That you and I were here
In days so long ago,
And plighted troth? Why, dear,
'Twere sweeter, kinder, better not to know.

The Empty Cup

To him she gave a goblet red with wine,
While he but drank and then forgot in fine.
Saw he how frail the glass was wrought, how
red

The fire glowed in the crystal bowl? Ah, no,
Enough for him the draught remembered, —
The cup was empty, let it go.

Oh, far too exquisite a glass for this,
Thus cast aside save with a quaffing kiss.
Yet, after all, what matter? Best or worst
It serves the same to hold the wine, and so
'Twill just as well allay a craven's thirst, —
The cup is empty, let it go.

A Forest Dream

To sleep again beneath the shadowed pines,
Hearing afar and sad the night-wind softly
 sighing
Amid the boughs, — breathing the dewy air
Wafted so cool upon my brow where I am
 lying
At rest, drunk with the perfume of your hair.
Ah, Spirit of the Pines, I would not care
Again to wake, if in your arms I might be
 dying!

A Song at Sunset

Clouds of saffron, crimson, golden,
Thrilling veils of gossamer;
In the shafts of dusk beholden
Vanished elfin lands recur.

And between an arras rending,
Turquoise-wrought infinitudes
Charm the mass of gorgeous blending
With soft minor interludes.

Oh, the wonder transformation! —
Roses gold from roses gray
In an aurate scintillation
From the leaden clouds of day.

Fabric of the sun's fair weaving,
Made of stuff too frail to hold;
Yet that moment of deceiving
Bursts with rapture manifold.

Promised isles lost in the gloaming,
Floating on effulgent fire;
Whither we would rest from roaming,—
Sunset Land of Heart's Desire.

So once seen those lights far burning,
From the Grail within the Garde,
Guide us upward — ever yearning —
Changed from savage into bard.

Clouds of saffron, crimson, golden,
Thrilling veils of gossamer;
In the shafts of dusk beholden
Vanished elfin lands recur.

Quatrain

Into this Garden wide, apart and lone
You came, — nor cast aside the tangled weed.
Though that was long ago, still from one
seed
Rue and Rosemary ever since have grown.

Life's Paradox

Wreaths from the censer's brazen grate
 Wandering listlessly
Against that calm inviolate,
 Wherefore so trouble ye?

Or, do ye seek that mystery
 Because, as I, ye must?
Knowing what was and is to be
 Are silence, ashes, dust.

Forgotten

Out far away in the distant street
I hear the echo of passing feet —
Your footsteps, Sweet.

It seems so strange, yes, it seems so queer
That you could wander away from here,
Without me, Dear.

Drifts

Did you ever watch the snow on a hill
Blowing and blowing yet never still,
Though the wind is low
And the wastes below
Rest like the dead in their icy chill? —
But the snow on the hill
Is never still.

And at night white wraiths in the ghastly
gleam,
Forbidden to sleep, lost lives redeem;
While the wind shrieks shrill
Round the frozen hill
As they cry and call in a maddening scream,—
For the wraiths on the hill
Are never still.

Withal

What if the miles stretch out and bar
That you and I should meet? why, even still
You are beneath this very moon and star
Which I am watching from my lonely hill,
And I can say low with a happy thrill,
You are not far, dear heart, you are not far.

Nöel

Sometimes the world seems harsher when the
 skies are gray,
 And more forlorn; —
Yet not a flower was blooming on the wintry
 day
 Ere Christ was born.

So ofttimes the day sinks to its gloomy end,
 Where all seems done,
The twilight colors paint themselves and glow
 and blend
 After the sun.

Solitude

Alone I weave a fancy in the glow,
While all the world outside is white with
 snow
And cheerless. But to me,
Musing before this fire and drowsily
Supposing that your head rests on my knee,—
Seeing the while your great eyes dim-des-
 cried, —
Heaven could not be fairer than that snowy
 world outside.

Illusion

There are so many flow'rs, so many songs,
So many fair things in this world of ours;
While I pretend that one to me belongs,
One song, one flower, from all these songs
and flowers.

Although it's blooming for the world I know,
Although it sings to you as tenderly,
I think it mine — what if it isn't so? —
And that those words are really meant for
me.

Legende

Across the seas,
Beyond the hill,
Within a grove, there lies
Upon the sward
An elfin thing
With madness in her eyes, —
For she is mad with joy because
The world seems Paradise.

And in the glades
Where steal the streams
Throughout the sunny day,
She wanders free
In fantasy
Along the flowery way,
And she is never sad, because
Life is a rondelay.

Yet just because
She is so pure,
And in her soul believes,
'Twere better not
To cross the hill
Or sail the sullen seas.

Quatrain

Oh, the waste of vain doubt and regret-
ting! —

Shall I seek for the thought that deceives,
When I find all — the old world forgetting —
In the whispers of silvery leaves?

Berceuse

Across the blue the fleecy clouds waft by,
Too fair of beauty thus so quickly sped, —
You do not see, for on my heart you lie,
You do not see, but know, for you are dead!

Sweet, sweet the strain throughout the dark-
ened air,
So faint, so far from out the passing day;
These dying roses crown your tawny hair,
This fading breeze sings our last roundelay.

It comes from where the snowy clouds are
gone, —
So still I listen to its ladened theme,
For, though I lose you at the morrow's dawn,
I still may find our garden of a dream.

Our garden where no cross-roads meet and
part,
Where roses bloom for aye, not witherèd, —
You'll lead me through the paths of sleep,
dear heart,
There shall I find those clouds where you are
dead.

Daphne

Do you not hear her song
When rosy showers fall
And forest whispers call
Along?

Do you not hear her feet
Now faint among the leaves, —
Or is 't the wind that grieves
So sweet?

Do you her face not see
Mid birches of a glade
Where sunbeams pass — half maid,
Half tree?

Two Chords

Two laden chords oft sound within the
soul:

One fraught with joy, a great pure major
theme;

The other, fragile as a half remembered
dream,

Throbs softly in a strain of minor dole.

And yet of these, the sweeter far to me

Is that grave echo of earth's tragedy.

October Night

The boughs weave a web where the moon
looks through

And the casement sways 'gainst the chilly
moon, —

Oh, strange that this sky now so cold and blue

Once was soft with the clouds of a sunny
June!

L'Envoi

Through the mesh of tangled rushes
 In the stream,
Glints of gold glow ruddy blushes
 Gleam for gleam,
And the Song of Sundown hushes
 To a dream.

As the breeze is faintly falling
 Cool and low,
As the whip-poor-wills are calling
 To and fro,
Soft it throbs with pain so palling
 In the glow.

Silent sobbing song of ending;
 You and I
Know the night will soon be bending
 O'er the sky, —
Know the silent words past mending
 Are "good-bye."

*Good-night;
And may your barque of dreams in twilight
Float beneath a wooded hill
Upon a lake of gold, as still
As death. Good-night.*

